

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PARIS 37190 211916Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 211817Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3425
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY BONN
USMISSION USNATO

S E C R E T PARIS 37190

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: X-GDS-1
TAGS: FR IS UK
SUBJ: FRENCH CONVERSATION WITH BEGIN IN LONDON

1. ELYSEE INTERNATIONAL STAFF SOURCE TOLD US IN
CONFIDENCE DECEMBER 20 THAT ELYSEE SECRETARY GENERAL
FRANCOIS-PONCET'S MISSION TO SEE BEGIN IN LONDON
LATE THAT DAY WOULD GO SOMEWHAT BEYOND FRENCH EFFORT
TO KEEP ABREAST OF FAST-MOVING MIDDLE EAST SITUATION.
GISCARD WAS ALSO CONCERNED TO ASSURE THAT REMOVAL
OF LONGSTANDING FRENCH-ISRAELI DIFFERENCES KEPT PACE
WITH RAPID EVOLUTION OF BEGIN'S POLICIES. OUR SOURCE
SAID THAT WHILE TIME WAS NOT YET RIPE TO SETTLE DATE
FOR BEGIN VISIT TO FRANCE, GISCARD WAS INTERESTED
IN ESTABLISHING THE SUBSTANTIVE FRAMEWORK WITHIN
WHICH VISIT WOULD BE NATURAL RESULT.

2. WE NOTE THAT, SUBSEQUENT TO HIS MEETING WITH
BEGIN, FRANCOIS-PONCET REPORTEDLY TOLD PRESS THAT
BEGIN VISIT TO FRANCE WOULD TAKE PLACE IN "RELATIVELY
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NEAR FUTURE," AND THAT DATE WOULD DEPEND ON CALENDARS
OF GISCARD AND BEGIN, AS WELL AS ON THE EVOLUTION
OF MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS.

3. COMMENT: GISCARD CLEARLY DOES NOT WANT TO BE
LEFT AT THE POST IF BREAKTHROUGH IN MIDDLE EAST
SHOULD BE IN THE MAKING. MOREOVER, PARTICULARLY
AFTER INITIALLY COLD FRENCH GOVERNMENT REACTION TO

THE SADAT TRIP, WHICH BACKFIRED IN FRANCE, IMPROVE-
MENT IN FRENCH-ISRAELI RELATIONS WOULD NOT HURT HIS
IMAGE IN UPCOMING ELECTIONS. FACT THAT FRANCOIS-
PONCET'S ONLY PUBLIC COMMENTS AFTER MEETING BEGIN
RELATED TO A VISIT TO FRANCE SUGGESTS THAT THEY
DISCUSSED THIS SUBJECT CONCRETELY AND POSITIVELY.
HARTMAN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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